

Gerrit Rietveld Academy off to great start



On opening day, Minister of Culture and Economic Affairs, Michelle Winklaar, presented the director of the prestigious Gerrit Rietveld Academy with a symbolic gift as a token of the government's pleasure to have this institution established here on our shores.

The building in which the institution is housed, although temporary, was named "The Elephant." Here they began offering their courses with much enthusiasm and dedication. As was agreed in Amsterdam at

the mother institution, the start date was to be November second, and despite the odds, they succeeded in opening on this date.

Aruba is the very first country outside of Holland where this world-renowned institution is established.

Last year Minister Michelle Winklaar-Hooyboer paid the institution a visit in Amsterdam and was able to personally witness their program, speak to teachers and students and experience something of the way the school functions. While there



she also spoke to Robin de Vogel, an Aruban student at the institute. Remarkable is that 50% of the students are international students hailing from various countries.

This proves that the interest from the cultural-artistic world is great and that Aruba would be able to attract students for a bachelor's degree from the region and from South America. Most likely, American students would also be interested in pursuing an art education here in Aruba.

The government of Aruba is placing much emphasis on the so-called "Creative Industries." The establishment of the Gerrit Rietveld Academy is an example of this direction of the government. The upcoming "Bienale di Arte" and the construction of the Museum of Art in 2012 is also a part the government's quest for developing the "Creative Industries."

The Gerrit Rietveld Academy is a well known name in Aruba, as many of our tal-

ented artists have studied at this institution in the Netherlands. They see the establishment of this institution here as new opportunities for them to, perhaps, teach or to send students to study here rather than to going all the way to Holland.

On opening day, Minister Winklaar-Hooyboer presented Gerrit Rietveld with a colorful and artistic wall poster designed by Joshua Ras, a young designer at Tera Group N.V.